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Senate

The Senate met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable LINDSEY O. GRAHAM, a Senator from the State of South Carolina.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Dr. Beryl G. Rosenberger, Healing Ministries for the Church, Anderson, SC.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, two centuries and 29 years ago this week, You called our Founding Fathers to set in writing the Declaration of Independence. Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this document stand as a beacon before all peoples.

And now, Lord God, You remind us to call unto You and that You will answer and tell us great and mighty things, which we do not know. You truly are our refuge and strength and ever-present help in trouble. These Senators assembled in this Chamber want wisdom and help in preparing for the next generation to continue this freedom of our generation. Any prayer that we pray begins with You and floods into our being, providing courage to come into Your presence with the assurance that You will answer.

So come, Eternal God, and ignite us once again with the brand plucked from the fire to speak, to lead, and to give vision to those to come.

Thank You for holding us accountable in decisions we make here today that grant liberty and justice for all, and thank You for giving us wills of iron and hearts of tenderness, determination and compassion, stubbornness and forgiveness as Your truth marches on. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable LINDSEY O. GRAHAM led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC-CENTRAL AMERICA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1307, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1307) to implement the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there are 16 hours for debate equally divided. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this morning we will resume consideration of the pending CAFTA legislation. Last night we began debate under the 20-hour time limitation. We now have 16 hours remaining and we do not expect to use the entire debate time allocated. Chairman GRASSLEY has indicated that he would not require all of the 8 hours remaining under his control. Thus, I hope we would be able to yield back some time, which would allow us to vote on this bill at a reasonable time today.

As mentioned yesterday on a number of occasions, we have two additional appropriations measures to complete this week, one of which is the Legislative Branch appropriations bill. It is ready for floor consideration. That bill will require only a short debate and could be finished without a rollcall vote.

Also, we expect to consider and complete the Energy and Water appropriations bill. It is possible we could finish both of those late tonight. It depends on how much debate time is used on the CAFTA bill and also how much time Energy and Water will require.

We have a number of other items to be completed before our recess, including the highway extension, as well as some nominations. It will take a lot of cooperation and a lot of hard work to be able to complete all of this. Again, there is a possibility we could finish late tonight but, if not, we are going to complete all this business, including the two appropriations bills, by Friday, and we could have votes into Friday as well.

We have our jobs and our tasks laid out for us. We need to stay here until we complete them before we leave for our recess.

CENTRAL AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. President, I want to comment on the CAFTA legislation which we turned to last night, the Central American Free Trade Agreement. We will vote on final passage of that agreement later today. CAFTA is a good bill. It is a fair bill and an evenhanded bill that Members from both sides of the aisle should be able to support in that this legislation expands the market for America's goods and thereby grows jobs here at home.

The agreement which President Bush signed in May of 2004 promises to eliminate trade barriers between the United States, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic. By doing so, it will level the playing field and by leveling the playing field will stimulate economic growth which, in turn, will stimulate job creation. America's market is already open. Nearly 80 percent of exports from the CAFTA region to the United States come into America duty free. Those barriers are already down.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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